

Lesson Title: MORE Work!

A Bible Study Lesson of  
The Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church

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**Introduction:** One of the memorable statements of Jesus is “I must work the work of Him that sent me while it is day. Night is coming when no man can work.” John 9: 4. The purpose of the statement is that Jesus recognized the urgency of His work. In three years, He had to begin and complete all that was before Him. This included training disciples, teaching, healing, feeding, raising the sick, explaining God’s word to lay people, giving sight to the blind, and among other actions, dying. Jesus understood that His responsibility was too great to casually approach ministry. He also realized the need for salvation was greater than the pain of persecution. Consider the lives at stake had He rested or slacked on the job! Even in the face of ridicule and opposition, Jesus focused on His task of saving the world.

We too must see the importance of what we do as we work in various ministry roles. The ridicule and persecution we face for our allegiance with Jesus requires us committing to the outcome rather than cowering to the enemy. MORE work is not a greater amount of work, it is a greater commitment to work even though it may come with challenges. REMEMBER, we are not the most vital component of work. Jesus’ mission is most important. Therefore, we must go to the finish line in our work for Him. 99 ½ will not do! Enjoy the lesson!

### **Lesson Scripture: 1 Peter 3: 15-17**

<sup>15</sup> But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, <sup>16</sup> keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. <sup>17</sup> For it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

## I. The Reason for Our Hope

The first three chapters of 1 Peter are organized as instructions to believers on Godly living. Those who are disciples of Jesus are not free to do anything we choose, rather we are freed from the power of sin in order to live as examples of Christ here on Earth. Thus, we need directions on how to live. First Peter chapters two and three give us clarity for how this looks.

Peter explains the structure of our lives in terms of a house or building, He presents a picture of a dwelling which has Jesus as the foundation. Our lives are to be built on Him alone. He identifies that our worship structure, our work endeavors, even our family life are to represent our faith walk in Christ. There is no Christian time and non-Christian time. Who we are in Christ is all encompassing and does not end when we end our morning prayers or after we read scripture for the day. As we purpose to live out our calling, we may find ourselves facing opposition from those who do not follow Christ. Peter presents this reality in chapter three.

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*If you were asked about your reason for having faith and hope in Christ, what would you say?*

Peter writes that our identity in Christ will position us to suffer and to be persecuted. We must understand that allegiance to Christ represents being at war with the world.

Jesus spoke of it in terms of hatred. In John 15 we hear Jesus speaking about the relationship of us to the world:

John 15: 18

**<sup>18</sup> “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. <sup>19</sup> If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.**

The suffering Peter alluded to includes rejection, hatred, and even harm to the believer. Regardless of the manner of persecution, we will an opportunity to speak about in whom we trust and why we have put our hope in Jesus. In those moments, we are to be prepared to give an answer for why we have placed our hope in Jesus Christ. We are to be in a space where we have an answer about what we believe and why we believe. Peter told his readers, be ready to talk about why you have hope in Christ.

- What would you say if someone told you they did not believe and wanted you to tell them why you are a believer?
- Have you dusted off your “Why?” so that it is fresh and ready to share with others?

## II. The Approach to Sharing

Interestingly enough, Peter commands us to present our hope in Christ in gentleness and respect. People may be persecuting us, but our response is not to mirror their behavior. You and I are to share our faith in a manner that draws people in rather than pushing people away. As we share our faith we are to be bold. We are to be confident. We are to be clear. We are to speak with power. Yet, we are never to be unkind or demeaning. Peter wrote for believers to be gentle and to be respectful.

- Why should we share our faith without attitudes of anger or animosity?
- Describe a time where you were too afraid to represent Christ and how you can overcome that fear in the future.

Numerous passages of scripture point to the power of testimony when it is given in the right manner. This is seen when the woman at the well testifies that Jesus is the Christ because Jesus “told her about herself.” We understand it from the Blind man who testified simply that he was blind and could now see because of Jesus. His testimony was given in front of a large group and the religious leaders who had the power to imprison him. Remember, you and I are responsible for throwing out the seed of The Word. We are not responsible for the ground it falls on.

Those who do not accept our message of faith in Christ must deal with their own choice. Our charge is to following Christ’s mandate to go and tell!

## III. The Commitment of the Hopeful



Verse 16-17 conclude the section of the current lesson with two affirming principles. First, the good work we do will be realized by evil doers. They will be ashamed when they notice that you and I do not retaliate or seek revenge for their evil deeds towards us. The criticism evil doers should have of all Christians is, “They are always doing good.” We read in scripture that in the end times everyone will acknowledge that The Lord’s way is the right way(See Matthew 5: 16 and 1 Peter 2: 12). We can also understand verse 16 to mean an acknowledgment of our good will occur in the present as we commit to living Godly lives.

- How does your life differ from those who are ungodly?
- How comfortable are you representing Christ on a daily basis?

Verse 17, again, reminds us about God's ability to bless us despite the persecution of others. Even as they seek to defame what we do, God's will still reigns. Notice, Peter writes that their treatment of us only occurs as it is God's will. Thus, they do not have the power to do anything unless God allows it. 1 Peter 5: 9-10 picks up this idea and indicates that the suffering in the short term leads to glory, vindication, and restoration. Therefore, we should stand firm in doing good knowing that God recognizes our commitment and will reward us and provide for all of our needs during the stress of evil doers.

**Conclusion:** The purpose of this lesson was to remind us of the great task we have for Jesus. As we accomplish said tasks, we may face opposition. Remember, the opposition you and I face is just par for the course. Don't stop your work for Jesus. Keep doing the good that you have been called to and Jesus will reward us for our faithfulness. You and I have MORE work to do!